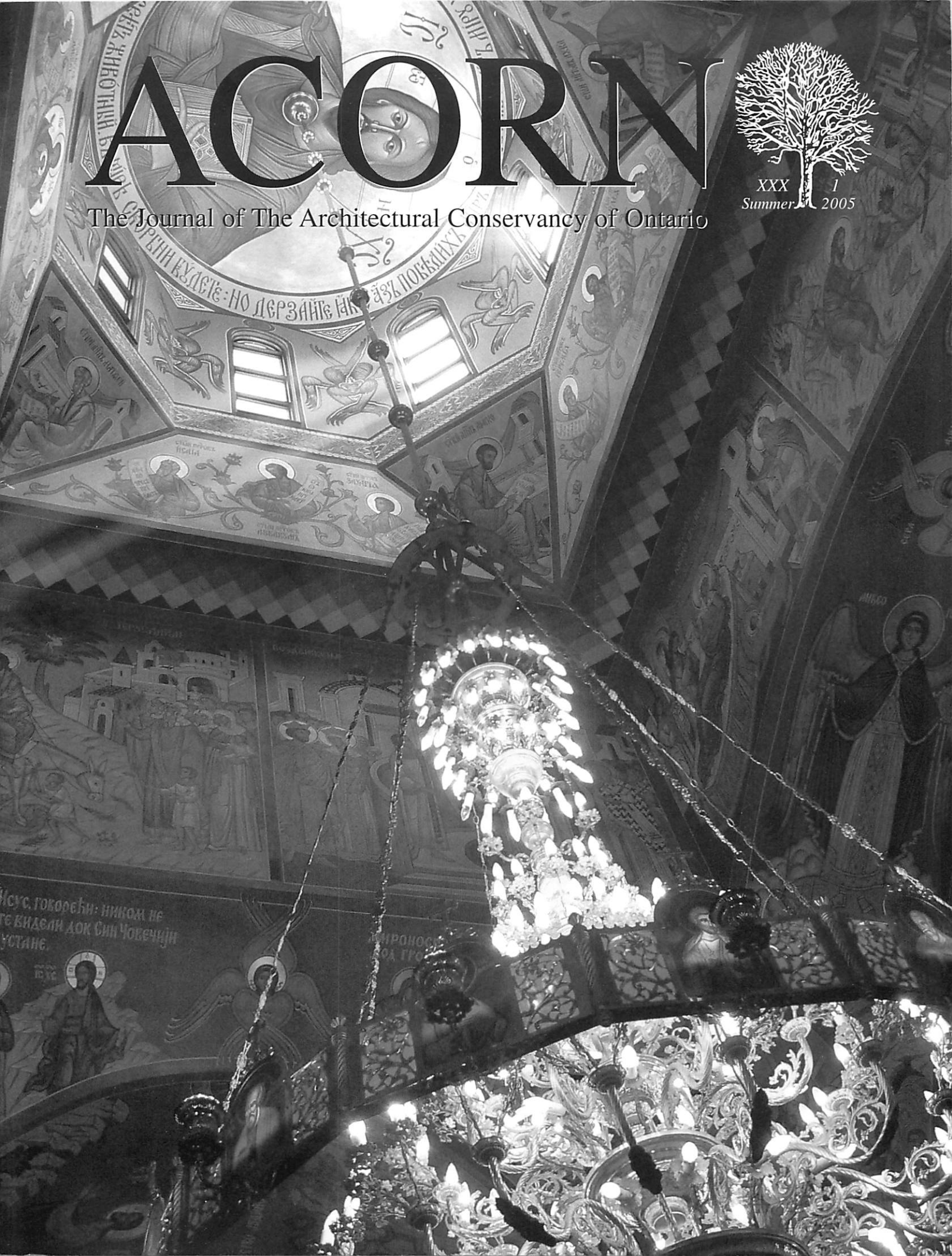


ACORN

The Journal of The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario





ACORN

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the Honourable Madeleine Meilleur, Minister, is gratefully acknowledged.

Cover: St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church opened its doors for the first time this year as part of Doors Open Hamilton. The church's architecture is Byzantine in style and features masterpieces of fresco iconography.

Photo: N. Loucks

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Incorporated in 1933
to preserve buildings and
structures of architectural
merit and places of natural
beauty or interest

From the Editor

Dan Schneider



Whew. Finally. Bill 60, An Act to Amend the Ontario Heritage Act, passed Third Reading by a vote of 77 to 6 on April 19 and received Royal Assent on April 28...just in time as it turned out for the joint ACO/Community

Heritage Ontario conference in Windsor. The amended Act is available on-line at www.e-laws.gov.on.ca or through the Ministry of Culture website at www.culture.gov.on.ca.

The passing of the Bill was the cherry on the cake of the conference, which, for those of you who missed it, was another great success—proving again that the combined forces of the two organizations produce a “critical mass” of preservationist energy and excitement. Hats off to the organizers for a terrific weekend.

In this issue, you can see photos from the conference as well as read the after-dinner speech by Richard Moorhouse, Executive Director of the Ontario Heritage Trust (former Ontario Heritage Foundation).

Rumour has it that for next year's conference we will—finally—be back in the eastern part of the province (how far east remains to be seen!).

Meanwhile...the Ministry of Culture has been soliciting stakeholder input for the development of regulations, guidelines and other measures to implement the changes included in Bill 60.

The first phase of consultations involved meetings in London, Toronto, Ottawa and Sudbury in May. Written comments were also received.

The meetings focused on the following topics:

- Municipal designation criteria and guidelines for their use
- Provincial significance criteria needed for the new provincial designation power
- Matters to be considered in exercising the new powers to approve or refuse demolition applications

ACO representatives took part in the London and Toronto sessions.

The Ministry expects that the regulations and guidelines from the first phase of consultations will be in place by the end of the year.

Through the fall, consultations will also be held on the listing of marine heritage sites for special protection under the Act, as well as on the listing of provincial public bodies subject to new standards and guidelines for provincially owned property.

President's Message

Scott Valens



The concept of civic and public squares or piazzas has come into acute focus for me in the past few weeks. It started with the controversial issue surrounding Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto, where City Council is toying with

ideas of design competitions to redesign the square. Perhaps more potentially, with my recent vacation in northern Italy, the experience of piazzas in Venice, Sienna, Vicenza, Arezzo and Florence left me wondering why urban designers in North American cities got it so wrong.

No matter where in Italy you visit there are multitudes of piazzas dotted throughout the cities and small towns. This is public space on a scale that permits local market vendors to set up and into which cafés can expand their seating areas, while providing the citizens of these ancient towns with a place to see and be seen. The piazza is an outdoor common living room. I guess for North America some would argue this space does exist in the form of shopping malls, but can it really replace urban public space when malls are privately, rather than publicly owned?

Piazzas come in many sizes, shapes and degrees of density, but they share common characteristics. They are enclosed by dense urban fabric, they generally are hard surfaced plazas, and they form what are some of the few open spaces within the town. In essence the piazza provides relief of open space, air and light. It is this contrast of density to relief, compression to expansion that makes experiencing them special. The space was created, generally speaking, when the town was formed. They may have been expanded or altered over time, but the main ingredient is that the town/city formed around a sacred space, reserved for the public—a sacred space that in many of the cities I visited has remained unaltered since the twelfth century.

Nathan Phillips square in Toronto is one of the few grand architectural gestures in the city. It is wholly part and parcel of Viljo Revell's winning City Hall competition (a competition that was ardently pushed for by ACO founder Eric Arthur). At issue are the bordering walkways surrounding the square. They have been closed for many years, and some members of council want to see them removed.

This is a great mistake in my opinion. The bordering walkways are a critical design element and hearken back to the piazza

designs of centuries past, a modern interpretation of the ground level colonnade like that of St. Mark's Square in Venice. Without this border, the square cannot exist in a contained manner.

The ACO is actively opposed to alteration of the square, and has been pushing to support the reopening of the walkways that contribute to the main civic piazza in the city—one that should be sacredly maintained as the urban environment gradually changes at its edge over time.

On May 26 I attended, and helped celebrate along with many other ACO members from the area, the 25th anniversary of the North Waterloo Branch held at the former Seagram Museum in Waterloo. North Waterloo has consistently been a strong branch in the ACO, and continues to maintain a dedicated following in Waterloo Region.

As part of that celebration, two of its founding members, Marg and Bob Rowell announced that they will be stepping down from their incredibly active role in the branch (and at the provincial level too—Marg was very active in the production of ACORN for many years). We all wish them well, and thank them for over 25 years of dedication and perseverance.

Insuring Canada's History

Heritage properties form an integral part of Canada's history. Unfortunately, until now owners have experienced a difficult time in obtaining affordable and appropriate insurance coverage. The Canadian Heritage Insurance Program has been specifically developed to address the unique needs of the Canadian Preservation Community. Canadian Heritage Insurance is extremely experienced in dealing with coverage, cost and claims issues relating to Heritage Assets.

These programs encompass all lines of insurance and provide the most cost effective insurance available for the following types of Historic Assets:

- Historic Homes
- Bed & Breakfasts
- Historic Hotels and Resorts
- Preservation Organizations
- Historic Schools (both public and private)
- Historic Commercial and Buildings
- Historic Collections
- Historic Commercial/Office Buildings

For a free no obligation consultation/quote please call:

Danny Sgro, P. Eng., C.I.P.
Canadian Heritage Insurance Program
416-420-7746 • danny@jdimi.com

Manager's Report

Rollo Myers



Bill 60: An encouraging number of radio, newspaper and television interviews led up to and followed passage of the much-needed amendments to the Ontario Heritage Act. And a thank you goes to all those who sent letters to the Premier, ministers, MPPs and press, and came to the Legislature to support Minister Meilleur at the critical vote. This protracted struggle points up the need for better communication within the heritage community. With its 11 branch offices, the Conservancy has a leadership role to play.

Vice president Cathy Nasmith recently received the prestigious Ontario Association of Architects Order of Da Vinci Medal given to an architect "who has demonstrated exceptional leadership in the profession, education, and/or service to the profession and their community" (*see photo in this issue*).

Heritage Georgian Bluffs has become our 12th branch.

Returns are still coming in for the "branchless" mass mailing, with approximately 60 renewals, some rejoining the regional branches, others supporting the provincial office. Provincial membership renewals dropped significantly at the end of 2003. Revenues fell accordingly, but renewal slips have been sent out, and provincial memberships are increasing towards former levels.

A significant number of the brochure membership forms have not been filled out correctly, and have required the chasing down of missing information—most commonly unchecked branch/provincial boxes. The brochure has now been updated, with highlighting to accentuate the key membership categories, and reprinted as stocks of the earlier version diminished.

A similar problem exists with PreservationWorks! forms that are filled out and signed, but not read as carefully as one would hope. A number of clients recently have not been aware that they were responsible for the consultant's out-of-pocket costs. The application form has been modified to highlight this key paragraph.

The Trillium grant application for a part-time PreservationWorks! manager is making its way through the system, with sponsors advising that they have been contacted by Trillium for reference checks, a hopeful sign.

Our successful 2005 Ministry of Culture's Summer Experience Program candidate is Christine D'Angelo, a third-year business and marketing student at the Schulich School of Business. Christine is busy cataloguing and summarizing technical articles and other contributions to past issues of ACORN in order to have them available online through our website to assist members and non-members to access relevant examples of specific building styles, adaptive re-use, restoration techniques and other information.

Insurance coverage: the ACO, along with Heritage Toronto and the Heritage Canada Foundation, has been in conversation with insurance brokers Jones Deslauriers & Firman of Toronto, with an interest in developing a division devoted to insuring heritage buildings in response to the perceived need. The Canadian Heritage Insurance Program is at the point of being officially launched (*see advertisement this page*).

Benjamin Moore (founded in 1906) and Heritage Toronto have presented the first collection of 32 "authentic Toronto Heritage Colours," following the success of similar initiatives in Vancouver and Victoria. The colours are based on interior and exterior paints that were widely used 100 or more years ago, with Dorothy Duncan sharing her extensive knowledge and research. The Benjamin Moore Community Restoration Program assists communities in understanding the historic colours of their buildings, and provides grants of up to \$5000 to support restoration projects.

Doors Open: the Ontario Heritage Centre was featured again this year, and those visiting the second floor were welcomed at the ACO office. Approximately 60 dropped in, chatted, took brochures and complimentary ACORNs.

The Lazarus Effect: the University of Waterloo Heritage Resources Centre's Trillium-Foundation-funded study into heritage renovation costs is nearly complete. Some minor corrections, revisions and updates are to be made prior to circulation.

The ACO office was emptied of all contents and repainted and redecorated for a film shoot in early May, realizing \$2500, but taking staff time to put everything back in place. This provided an opportunity to clear away outdated files and equipment, and to give the office a fresh new look. The office is now set up so that moving the contents temporarily off site is relatively simple, with less staff time involved. This was tested in a second film shoot with an easier transition. The film shoots are a valuable revenue source if kept efficient.

Daniel Liebeskind has been retained to develop a plan for the revitalization of the Hummingbird (formerly O'Keefe) Centre in Toronto. The first public consultation drew a positive response to the initial design, which frames this modern landmark and leaves it relatively untouched, with sightlines protected.

10th

Annual ACO Fundraiser for Members, Guests and Friends

Friday, November 4, 2005
at the historic Arts &
Letters Club in Toronto

*Reception, Dinner, Guest
Speaker, Auction*

Call 416-367-8075 to reserve,
or for further details

The Car, the Committee and the Open Door Conservation Stories of Ontario

Richard Moorhouse



Richard Moorhouse, Executive Director of the Ontario Heritage Trust, with Pat Malicki, President of the Windsor Region ACO
Photo: Rollo Myers

Editor's note: This speech was given at the conference banquet of the 2005 Architectural Conservancy of Ontario/Community Heritage Ontario Conference. The banquet was held on Saturday, April 30 at Mackenzie Hall in Windsor.

It's a pleasure to be here tonight. I had the honour to be in the Legislature last week along with many others to witness the passing of the amendments to Bill 60 and it truly was a watershed moment for this Province. This is a time of great celebration for heritage. For many of

you in this room, heritage conservation has been a major focus of your lives and a major commitment that you have made to your community.

I would like to thank the ACO and the CHO for hosting such an excellent conference. We have all benefited from the presentations and interactions of the last few days and will for many months to come. By working together these two organizations have created an excellent forum for the exchange of ideas and a forum for the exploration of new opportunities and approaches for conservation.

In preparing for this presentation, I reviewed a number of books, speeches and articles that I have collected over many years, and that were written by others who have fought hard before us in trying to save Ontario's heritage sites. I'll be referring to some of these sources as I go along.

I went back into the 60s and was reminded of a very different time and place in Ontario. I started to think of what it was like then and where we are now and where are we headed in this evolving heritage conservation movement in Ontario.

And that is what I wish to talk to you about tonight.

I started re-reading the *Ancestral Roof*, *Hallowed Walls* and *Cornerstones of Order* and was reminded of the beauty of what constitutes our built heritage legacy. And if you haven't had the opportunity to browse through *Ontario Towns* or *Rural Ontario*, then take the time and it will remind you of why we must always stay committed to what we do.

It was wonderful to read again about Anthony Adamson and Marion MacRae driving the back roads of Ontario looking for good houses, churches and institutional buildings. They traveled across Ontario in a very special car that became their means for seeking out sites and gaining access to heritage buildings.

Anthony Adamson stated:

"We had to appear cultured and above suspicion. I therefore bought a beautiful, second-hand grey Lincoln and we would roll soundlessly up to the front door of every unearthed Neo-Classical, Georgian or Gothic Revival house and ring the doorbell. The owner would come to the door, twenty feet of Lincoln would purr at her. My wife

would engage her in gracious chat, Marion would absorb the ambience and I would rush upstairs and measure the bedrooms."

These were the early days for identifying what was felt to be important. The federal government and Ontario municipalities such as Kingston and others were beginning to undertake inventories and Eric Arthur had developed his famous green booklets. These were the first steps in evaluating and saying to others which heritage buildings mattered. These publications became a record of what was significant and needed to be protected and preserved. Even in 1963, however, Adamson and MacRae stated that:

"During the writing of *The Ancestral Roof*, one house in eleven which we found interesting or of architectural merit has been either pulled down, burned or so altered as now to lack interest or merit. Our architectural heritage is vanishing, and not slowly. It is in need of understanding and of protection."

It was a strong call to action then, 42 years ago, just as it continues now.

The authors also gave respectful reference to the ACO stating that: "for thirty years the ACO, a private society, has been trying to prod the public conscience to recognize that buildings can of themselves be notable even though John A. MacDonald never slept there."

Such public interest and the advance of progress raised a consciousness in Ontario that something needed to be done to preserve and protect heritage sites in the province. Ontario was one of the last provinces in Canada to realize this need and as we all know, in 1975 the Ontario Heritage Act received royal assent. In some ways it was an extremely enlightened piece of legislation since it empowered municipalities to determine what was important in their own communities and provided tools to address the protection of heritage sites. It allowed for the creation of an important municipal committee known as a LACAC—the committee that was to play such an important role within Ontario's communities. Unfortunately, as we all know, the tools of designation were the weak link and resulted in an Act that would never meet the needs of preservationists in the Province.

It's interesting to note that in 1976, only a year after the proclamation of this Act, a conference was held in Kingston called "New Life for Old Buildings" to take stock of what was happening in heritage in Ontario, and already concerns were being raised about the ineffectiveness of the legislation. If you have never read the proceedings, I highly recommend them as an excellent record of a point in time for heritage in Ontario.

Catherine Smale, who attended the conference and at the time was a director with the Ontario Heritage Foundation and a Councillor with the Town of Simcoe, stated: "The Ontario Heritage Act is the beginning of an important cultural commitment in the Province. It already needs amendment and will continue to need changes in the future. Its effectiveness and strength will develop as people realize the need and it is therefore, up to us to spread the message of preservation both to the people and to the government of Ontario." This statement could have been written yesterday because the need to spread the word is still so prevalent today.

Anthony Adamson attended this conference and gave a plenary wrap up presentation. He concluded that: "It seems to me that there is an immense nostalgic, unguided groundswell in favour of

conservation on the part of the public. I think it is the job of LACACs to guide this groundswell so that the right advice is given to councils. It seems to me that many LACACs are trying to second-guess councils and to be politicians themselves. Their job is rather to become informed on heritage matters, including history, architecture and the economics of redevelopment. Their chief job is to recommend buildings for designation on sound researched grounds. The roles of foundations, the ACO and Heritage Canada are different: they are activists, they do not advise. We must learn to separate our aims if we are to succeed. We cannot wear two hats if we want to be either successful advisors or successful activists."

It's ironic to hear these words, as we sit here today with the ACO/CHO working together utilizing the best efforts of each organization for the benefit of heritage in this province.

For three years in the early '80s I had the privilege of being the province's LACAC co-coordinator. And I say privilege because it truly was an honour to work with communities and LACACs across Ontario. I was not driving a grey Lincoln, but a government issued station wagon that no one would ever describe as luxurious.

The Port Hope Branch Special 40th Anniversary ACO Annual House Tour

**Saturday Oct. 1, 2005
10:00 am to 4:00 pm**

Homes on view:

Bluestone House Ca.1834

Penryn Homestead Ca.1829

Clemes Duplex Ca. 1876 (both halves)

Wonderful Victorian Country Home 1850

2 Barrett's Terrace Homes Ca 1860s & 1890s

New architect designed Ultra-modern Home Ca 2004

The Baptist Church Ca 1867

Tickets for this special tour will sell out quickly and can be purchased as of July 1, 2005. The cost is \$25.00 with proceeds going toward worthy ACO projects in the community. For tickets or further information please call 905-885-7929.

Meals on Tour Day available at various restaurants and Church Halls.

B&B Accommodations call 1-888-PORT HOPE.

My work followed a similar pattern for I was either working with a local group of citizens, who wanted to establish a LACAC, or meeting with the municipal council or meeting with an established committee. These sessions were almost always in the evening and there was usually a meeting, a visit to the local pub and then a tour of the community. Many times I would leave after midnight to head home. There is something about being a perfect stranger in a town and saying how much you enjoy old buildings and the next minute you would be whisked to a LACAC member's house or they would take you to friends and invite you to take a look. I gained access to so many interesting places.

I would arrive for my meetings with a huge briefcase, like a Fuller Brush man's suitcase, with everything that I felt a group would need to know and of course the much needed slide projector. With the slide show one was able to present what others were doing to save their heritage. The power of the slide projector was very strong. Many a time I came into the room in a church hall or schoolroom or council chamber and the coffee perk would be perking away, I would plug in that old projector causing the circuits to blow and the room to transcend into darkness. The best was in Parry Sound where I blew the circuit for the fire hall and part of the downtown. Ah, the powers of the slide show.

The questions never changed: What is designation? What does LACAC stand for? If I designate my property will I still be able to paint my washroom any colour I want? Is there any money?

The sad thing is that these questions are still asked today!

Being on a LACAC created an opportunity for citizens to become more involved in community issues. Numerous people I met who sat on the early LACACs later became the chair and over time became a member of council or the mayor or reeve of their municipality. Some went on to become the first heritage planner for their community—it was a springboard for community involvement and for increased influence related to heritage conservation issues.

Although the Act was weak and needed to be a lot stronger, it is important to stop

for a moment and realize what has been achieved through the work of many in this province including many of you in this room tonight.

A few statistics illustrate some of the heritage community's achievements over the past thirty years as a result of the former Act:

- Over 5,800 individual properties have been designated under Part IV of the Act;
- Well over 10,000 additional properties are on municipal lists;
- 70 heritage conservation districts are in place representing 17,000 protected properties;
- 130 active Municipal Heritage Committees (formerly LACACs) are in existence;
- Over 50 communities have grant, loan or tax relief programs to encourage investments in heritage properties;
- Over 250 municipal heritage conservation easements are in place;
- 200 Ontario Heritage Foundation conservation easements have been registered; and
- There are over 17,000 registered archaeological sites.

To name just a few achievements. And what do you think these statistics will look like in the future with Bill 60 now in place?

But there are other achievements that are important to this story which are part of the evolution of the heritage movement in Ontario as a result of the Act, as a result of government support, but more importantly because of the interest of local citizens that wish a better deal for heritage in this province; and some of these achievements are:

- The creation of the Community Heritage Ontario (CHO) organization, bringing Municipal Heritage Committees under their own umbrella organization;
- The joint partnership between the ACO/CHO for these conferences;
- The creation of the Canadian Association of Professional Heritage Consultants (CAPHC) in 1987, a

organization for heritage professionals across Canada;

- Over 40 municipalities have heritage planners or other heritage professionals with jobs dedicated to heritage planning;
- The provincial plaque program is still in existence and as strong as it was 50 years ago, with 1,200 provincial plaques recognizing the diverse and varied heritage of this province in place; and
- I would like to end this list with Doors Open Ontario. This program that started out small three years ago has been named one of the top 50 festivals in Ontario, and has attracted 1.2 million visitors to date and this year will have 44 events representing 180 communities that started last weekend in Guelph.

We're certainly entering into a new and exciting phase for heritage conservation in Ontario. What will this mean for those of us involved in heritage work in the future?

If you accept that the activity of heritage conservation generally involves the four key steps of identification, protection, preservation and promotion, then how are these activities evolving and changing?

Let's look at identification and promotion. To me, Doors Open Ontario represents a new vibrant stage in how we identify and promote heritage. It has become a cultural phenomenon. It's as if we are in a way starting over again to identify, like Anthony Adamson and Marion MacRea did 40 years ago, what we feel is important to celebrate about the heritage in our communities. It builds on the work of the ACO since the 1930s and builds on the work of municipal heritage committees since the 1970s but it does it in a different way—a more integrated approach within a community.

It's not just an individual determining for others what is important but a local committee comprised of heritage groups, arts groups, chamber of commerce, BIA, tourism and economic development groups, environmental groups, cultural sites, etc. It results in a more populist approach to heritage. The more people and groups we have involved and working in an integrated

way, the more successful we will be. Partnerships with new organizations and interests will serve to expand our influence and effectiveness and improve the way we promote the importance of heritage in communities across the province.

The second step in heritage conservation is protection.

Tony Tung informed us last year in Hamilton that what this province needed was binding legislation. Well, we now have binding legislation—which will create a whole new framework and culture for heritage conservation. What will this new framework look like?

It's early days, but people are starting to speak out on the possible impacts.

Just last week a developer on a radio show stated that the amended act would result in changes to how developers work with municipalities and heritage groups. He was indicating that developers will not want to pay expensive legal costs to resolve issues at the OMB and will want to negotiate and compromise with the community instead.

Will municipalities embrace their new powers and use them for the benefit of the communities they govern? This is all yet to be determined.

I wonder what Anthony Adamson and Marion MacRae would think of this new legislation? I imagine they would have been pleased to have such tools and powers 30 years ago.

We can start to remove phrases from our vocabulary that have been the norm and we have used forever. Phrases like:

- Sorry, but the act does not prevent demolition; an owner can ultimately tear the building down.
- There is a 180-day grace period but then the building can be torn down.
- No, the province can't designate the site.
- No, designation doesn't ultimately protect the site. Et cetera, et cetera.

We can now say to municipalities that you do have the power to protect and to prevent demolition. It can be imposed on an owner. It is binding legislation. Demolition stops now!

With respect to the preservation phase of heritage conservation, we have to make preservation the norm and redevelop-ment the exception. We have to make preservation and adaptive re-use the assumption not the exception. To this end, we have another new tool. The new provincial Policy Statement, which came into effect on March 1, 2005, goes a long way towards realizing this goal:

Section 2.6.1 states that: "Significant built heritage resources and significant cultural heritage landscapes shall be conserved."

This simple statement carries with it tremendous weight. It defines the retention, enhancement and continued use of our heritage stock as a core public interest. As Ontario gets accustomed to this new way of planning our communities the value of heritage may finally begin to take its place alongside all of the other readily recognized and accepted public objectives. And maybe someday we may not even need a separate act to reach our goals.

So we have legislation to help us. What else is needed if we are going to be successful?

We have the stick and we need the carrot too. There need to be incentives, they need to come in the form of grants and tax incentives and other means to preserve those sites that are and will be protected. We have all seen the benefits here in Ontario and in other countries to having incentives to finance and support the conservation of heritage buildings and the revitalization of historic neighbourhoods.

There is a continuing need for expertise in the trades and of professional consultants. Consequently education has to remain crucial to maintaining the momentum and ensuring that the successes of the past do not become the mistakes of the future.

We need to celebrate our successes and denounce bad practices that result in demolitions or the marginalization of a community's heritage.

We need to encourage and create opportunities for young people to become involved. We owe it to them and we owe it to ourselves because it will help to refresh the heritage movement in

Ontario and ensure its future. Over the past four years, the Ontario Heritage Foundation has recognized the volunteer work of over 3,000 students across the Province through its Young Heritage Leaders program, one of many ways to celebrate and encourage the involvement of young people in the conservation movement.

And lastly, what of the term heritage conservation? What do we mean when we use this term?

The word heritage does get used a lot—when you think of heritage designations, heritage properties and sites, heritage museums, heritage planning, heritage plaques, heritage groups, etc. But, now terms like cultural tourism and heritage tourism are becoming the norm. But terms such as downtown revitalization, community economic development and neighbourhood preservation have always implied or included heritage activity.

We need to make sure heritage continues to become more integrated into the planning of our communities and the lives of Ontario's citizens. Heritage is not a luxury; it is not an after-thought or just an adjective but part of our day-to-day existence. It helps form our society and it helps drive local, regional and provincial economies.

As we move forward into the twenty-first century, I would suggest it's important we reassess our objectives from a first principles perspective. We need to increase the public support for conservation. By broadening public understanding we can effect the much needed vital shift that is not only required in Ontario but throughout our entire global civilization. Simply put—the challenge for all of us is to communicate the simple message that the proliferation of the conservation ethic is the secret towards humanity's survival on this planet.

Why is conservation so important? ...because it quite literally holds the key to our future. We know where we have to go and the door is open. What are we waiting for?

Richard Moorhouse is Executive Director of the Ontario Heritage Trust.

A Successful Partnership— Hamilton Architecture Week & Doors Open 2005

Donna M. Reid



One of the most popular Doors Open Hamilton sites was the Neo Classical former Bank of Montreal building soon to be the Hamilton home of Gowlings law firm
Photo: N. Loucks

The first week of May was chock full of architectural events in Hamilton this year. For the first time Architecture Week, an initiative of the Hamilton and Burlington Society of Architects and the Hamilton Branch of the ACO, was moved so the dates would coincide with Doors Open Hamilton. The result was a full week of architectural tours, presentations and heritage activities across the city.

The week kicked off April 29 with a guided tour of the soon-to-be-designated Hamilton City Hall with the building's architect, Stanley Roscoe. Eighty-three year old Roscoe shared his original vision and guiding principles with over 100 visitors and MP Russ Powers (Doors Open Honourary Chair). The tour was followed by an illustrated lecture and retrospective of the architecture of Roscoe by Hamilton architect and ACO member Ken Coit.

Three well-known Hamilton landmarks, unable to open their doors for the weekend event, hosted "behind the scenes" tours.

Architect Trevor Garwood-Jones led the informative tour of Hamilton Place on May 2. On May 3, over 450 people gathered outside the Scottish Rite (site of the 2004 ACO/CHO Joint Conference)! Guide and ACO member Jean Rosenfeld was able to accommodate 120, though half that were expected, and graciously provided two tours. The Hamilton Region Branch of the ACO has since scheduled two additional tours of this building. The third Architecture Week tour took place Wednesday evening at the magnificent Church of Christ the King. In addition to the tours, Architecture Week also featured a movie festival of architecture-related movies at The Staircase Theatre.

In its third year, Doors Open Hamilton featured 33 sites across the city. Hamilton's Civic Museums participated, opening the doors to seven museums as part of both Doors Open and Museums Month. Together they recorded well over 3,000 visitors—significantly more than previous "open house" weekends.

Doors Open sites included both repeats from previous years and several very exciting newcomers.



The once grand facade of Century Manor designed by Kivas Tully and built in 1884
Photo courtesy of Donna Reid

In the former category, Auchmar Estate, the once grand home of Sir Isaac Buchanan and the last of the mountain brow manor estates, once again was the star attraction with over 1,200 visitors during the two-day period. This unique estate, with its extensive grounds, orchard, dovecote, walled garden and stable, remains empty and in desperate need of revitalization.

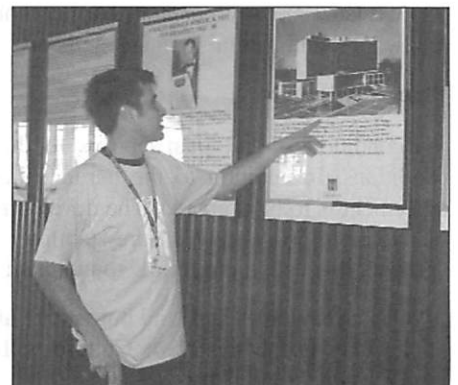
The Neo-Classical former Bank of Montreal building, in the

heart of downtown, was open for the first time since interior renovations started two years ago. Built in 1928, and designed by Kenneth Rea, with stone carvings by William Oosterhoff, it will soon be the Hamilton home to Gowlings, one of Canada's oldest and largest law firms. Nearly 1,000 visitors donned hard hats to enter the restored banking hall and learn first hand about the project from the contractors and Gowlings staff.

On the Doors Open Hamilton "wish list" since 2003, the doors to Century Manor finally swung open to greet over 800 visitors. This is the last Victorian structure on the former Hamilton Psychiatric Hospital grounds and it has been closed since 1995. Though poor maintenance and signs of vandalism were evident throughout, a team of volunteers, under the leadership of Pat Saunders, a former employee and member of the Hamilton Historical Board, provided informative tours and displays.

Other top Doors Open sites, in terms of visitor numbers, were Lancaster's Shaver Homestead (circa 1856); Vermeulen/Hind Architects (adaptive re-use of 1958 bowling alley); Hamilton Cemetery; John Weir Foote Armoury (1888 C. W. Mulligan and 1908 Stewart Witton architects); and St. Nicholas Serbian Orthodox Church (1974 Radovan Radovic). Over 14,000 site visits were recorded—the most successful architectural event ever held in Hamilton. Plans are already underway for next years combined Architecture Week and Doors Open event so mark your calendars for the first week of May 2006.

Donna M. Reid is Chair of the Doors Open Hamilton Committee.



Interpretative panels at Hamilton City Hall trace the architectural history of the 1960 building, which is proposed for designation under the Ontario Heritage Act
Photo: H. McClellan

Creditdale Farm: Home and Studio of Canadian Landscape Architect Preserved in Brampton

Jim Leonard

Introduction

In the early 1990s Creditdale Farm, located at 8028 Creditview Road (north-west corner of Steeles and Creditview Road) in southwest Brampton, was formally listed as a municipal heritage resource. Creditdale Farm, comprising about 12.63 acres of land, is situated on a large flat terrace, primarily within the floodplain of the Credit River. The Credit River is located 50 metres to the east and a bluff is found on the western edge of the property.

In recent months the historic property has come under greater scrutiny. H-R Development, a local developer, acquired Creditdale Farm as part of a 39 hectare land acquisition. They are proposing a residential subdivision development on the tablelands surrounding the property. The City of Brampton, working in partnership with H-R, is exploring various options to ensure the ongoing preservation, stewardship, integration and adaptive re-use of all heritage resources found on the property.

A key element of Creditdale Farm's importance is its link to Carl Borgstrom (1884-1951), one of Canada's premier landscape architects. Borgstrom owned the property and used it as his studio from 1939 to the 1950s. In the Borgstrom years the property was called, "Churchville Downs." Carl Borgstrom established a landscaping plan for the grounds surrounding the farmhouse. Fortunately most of this landscaping plan survives to this day and his original plans on linen have recently surfaced.

In the 1950s the farmhouse was expanded and restored by the subsequent owners, Charles and Barbara Kee. These alterations were under the direction of Canadian restoration architect, B. Napier Simpson (1924-1978). It was the Kee's that renamed the property, "Creditdale Farm."

In addition to the built and natural heritage, several Late Archaic archaeological sites are found on the property. The Ministry of Culture has determined these sites to be significant.

The protection of this significant property would be an important demonstration of the City's Heritage Strategy and its "Flower City Strategy," which draws heavily on the historical legacy of Brampton as "Flower Town of Canada." This theme is especially evident with regard to Creditdale Farm's associations with Carl Borgstrom.

Creditdale Farm will soon be designated under Part IV of the Ontario Heritage Act. The principle heritage attributes include: the Neo-Classical, red-brick farmhouse dating to 1865; a late nineteenth century barn complex; the Borgstrom landscaping plan; cultural landscapes; and natural heritage elements.

Planning Process

The conditions of draft plan approval for the proposed subdivision contain certain heritage conditions. In addition to the heritage designation, a heritage conservation easement agreement is to be prepared. The development company has also agreed to a preventive maintenance program to ensure stability of all standing structures and grounds, as any "prudent owner" would follow to maintain property values.

Avoidance strategies and land buffers are also to be established to meet the requirements of the City and Ministry of Culture with regard to the protection of archaeological resources on the property.

Long Term Preservation

The City of Brampton recently launched a feasibility study to consider long-term preservation strategies for Creditdale Farm. The Brampton Heritage Board is funding the study.

A business case and methodology for long-term preservation will be addressed.

The importance and potential of the Creditdale Farm hinges on the site being restored, maintained and sensitively adapted—in its entirety. The heritage consultants will explore two principle options: a) that the City acquires the property and develops a public heritage program; and b) that the property remains in private hands and its preservation is guided by a conservation easement and a stewardship plan, which may or may not include a public access component.

The study will also consider opportunities to promote the heritage significance of the site. Unique eco-tourism/cultural tourism opportunities may be present and are worth exploring.

Early History of Creditdale Farm

In 1865 Francis Bransby and his wife Mary purchased the parcel of land where Creditdale Farm is located.

Bransby was born in Yorkshire, England and came to Canada in 1851. He settled first in Vaughan Township, then in the early 1860s relocated to this area and built the main portion of the house known today as Creditdale Farm.

The masonry farmhouse exhibits vernacular Classical Revival design. It retains many original architectural elements and presents a simple, well-proportioned elegance.

Carl Borgstrom purchased the Creditdale property in the late 1930s and designed a landscape plan for the area around the house. Borgstrom named the property "Churchville Downs" and used it as his studio for several years. Borgstrom also enlarged the house with a rear wing addition.

Borgstrom's Landscaping Plan

Carl Borgstrom's landscaping plan is concentrated around the house and includes the following elements: field stone retaining walls, steps and fences; uniform, linear arrangements of boxwood hedges and shrubs, terraced lawns, cultivated formal flower beds, gardens and other plantings; controlled views and vistas framed by the careful grouping of trees and coniferous hedgerows; trellis structures with climbing vines; curvilinear stone retaining walls, stone pathways, a small orchard at

the rear of the main house and an overall integration of natural elements with the house and planned landscaping elements.

Also of note is a tall 70 to 100 year old linden tree on the front lawn, possibly the oldest in the City of Brampton, and the in-ground swimming pool (the first privately owned in-ground pool in the city, dating to the 1950s). The pool is equipped with a Jacuzzi pumping system.

It is rare for a large and intricate landscaping plan to survive to the present day. It is also rare for a landscaping plan to be attributed to a specific landscape architect, much less one with the stature of Carl Borgstrom. Generally such large tracts of land are lost to development, neglect, shifting tastes and other factors.

Who was Carl Borgstrom?

Carl Borgstrom was born in Sweden in 1884. After the First World War he emigrated with his family to Canada. Borgstrom "was rated among the most outstanding landscape designers in early twentieth century Ontario." As a young man he traveled throughout Europe and according to his business partner, Humphrey Carver, "worked in the great gardens of France, Germany, Sweden and England, where he learned from the masters and the head gardeners how everything in a garden is made." He was also heavily influenced by the work of noted American landscape architect, Frederick Law Olmstead. Over time he became a dedicated environmentalist.

In 1929 Borgstrom won the competition for the north-west gate entrance to the City of Hamilton at the High Level Bridge. He was with the firm Wilson, Bunnell and Borgstrom at 57 Queen Street West in Toronto at this time. This commission included aesthetic improvements including a large alpine rock garden created out of an abandoned gravel pit, later the Royal Botanical Gardens.

The Royal Botanical Gardens were officially established in 1930 but very little progress was made on its development until the end of the Great Depression. During the 1930s lands were slowly acquired for the future development of the RBG. In 1942 Thomas B. McQueston, Minister of Highways, named Carl Borgstrom as the principle designer for the Gardens.



Front elevation focusing on Neo Classical main block built about 1865. This well setback elevation faces Steeles Avenue.



View showing barns complex at the rear of the farmhouse.

Borgstrom prepared the master plan that called for "great swatches of colour and textures for all seasons." He recommended mass plantings of lilacs, crab apple trees, cherry trees, rose gardens, climbing plants, herb gardens, fern gardens, bulb gardens and a zoo with the animals in natural habitats. Borgstrom argued that if the RBG was to survive it had to become a major public attraction. The importance and attractiveness of the Royal Botanical Gardens is directly attributable to Borgstrom's master plan.

The RBG was not the only park established under Borgstrom's direction. Borgstrom developed

the parks system for the Niagara Parks Commission. And, in 1929, he designed the landscaping plan for the Brampton Golf and Country Club in collaboration with nationally significant golf course architect, Stanley Thompson. He was also extensively involved in the establishment of Lorne Park in Mississauga and the Lorne Park Nursery (now Richard's Memorial Park) in the late 1920s.

The landscaping plan surrounding Sunnyside Pavilion on Lakeshore Boulevard in Toronto was also the work of Borgstrom, and in 1936 he prepared the original design for the Oakes Garden Theatre in Niagara Falls.

He is also responsible for the original landscaping plan for the Queen Elizabeth Highway (QEW), using native and ornamental tree specimens.

In partnership with Humphrey Carver (1902-1995), Borgstrom designed the Queen Victoria Park Administration Building in Niagara Falls and surrounding grounds.

Borgstrom and Carver were town planners as well as landscape architects. In that capacity they designed the landscaping plan for Kapuskasing, Ontario (1928). They also designed Mather Park in Fort Erie, Ontario and prepared the plan for Meadowwood Subdivision in the Clarkson area.

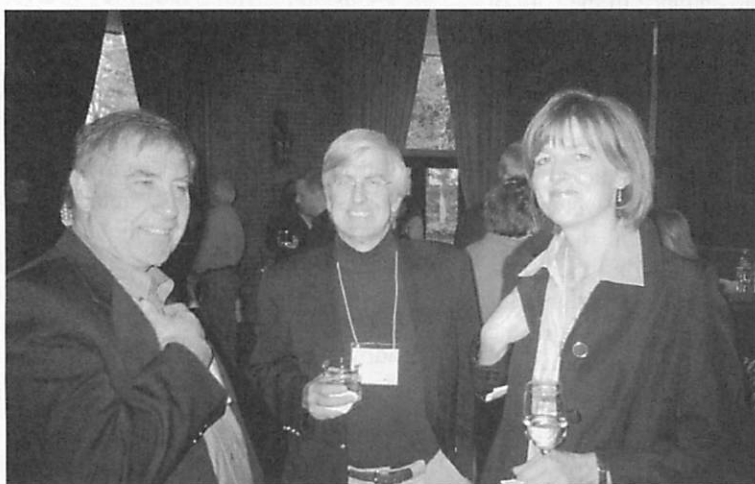
Private commissions included a massive landscape plan for the E.B. Taylor Windfield Farm estate in Toronto (1920s); the estate of C.L. Burton, President of Robert Simpson Company (1928); the property of newspaper magnet George McCullagh, owner and publisher of The Globe and Mail; a golf course in Jamaica (1930-31); several homes in Rosedale neighbourhood in Toronto; "Chicopee," the Harvey Sims Estate (1933); and, "Snowhill," the William Sims house (1943). Both of these latter properties are in Kitchener. Borgstrom also designed the landscape plan for the George McCullough estate on Bayview Avenue (now used as Shouldice Clinic in Thornhill). He also designed the entrance to Thorncliffe Raceway in Toronto.

Borgstrom was a founding member of the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (1934) and in 1935 served as its president.

continued on page 14



(From left) ACO Vice-President Sharon Vattay, Deputy Culture Minister Terry Smith, Culture Minister Madeleine Meilleur, ACO President Scott Valens and ACO Vice-President Cathy Nasmith
Photo: Rollo Myers



(From left) Don Menard, Chris Borgal and Sharon Vattay at the Friday night reception
Photo: Rollo Myers



Ministry of Culture staff (from left) Kate Oxley, Chris Mahood, Assistant Deputy Culture Minister Marjorie Mercer, Heather Thomson, and Ghislaine Brodeur during the Ministry of Culture's pre-conference workshop at Mackenzie Hall
Photo: Rollo Myers



Amherstburg's Bellevue
Photo: Rollo Myers



Tamara Anson-Cartwright and Joel Ceresne at Mackenzie Hall
Photo: Dan Schneider



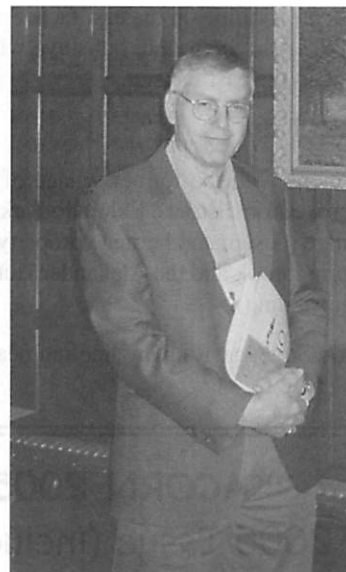
Amherstburg's Park House
Photo: Rollo Myers



The Essex County tour also included Argyle Castle in Amherstburg.
Photo: Rollo Myers



Ontario Heritage Trust Executive Director Richard Moorhouse and
OHT Director of Heritage Programs and Operations Beth Hanna in
front of Christ Church, Amherstburg
Photo: Rollo Myers



Community Heritage Ontario
President Paul King at Willistead
Manor
Photo: Rollo Myers



Paul Tremblay as French
explorer Antoine de Cadillac
Photo: Andrew Foot

Carl Borgstrom died in 1951 in Meadowvale and his ashes were scattered on the Creditdale Farm property.

Borgstrom preferred to "let the trees and grounds develop in their own natural way" to encourage a natural, scenic presentation that would continue to evolve over time. His designs typically demonstrated a seamless integration of existing natural features such as ponds, ravines, groupings of mature trees and terraces with cultivated gardens, boxwood hedges and specimen trees. He dedicated his life to studying the interrelations between the natural environment and the built form so that he could find better ways to make the two harmonize.

He typically clustered gardens and other features very close to main houses and buildings to create virtual outdoor rooms and to encourage greater integration of natural and built forms. Stonewalls, gates, terraces, fountains, trellis features and other structural elements were often introduced to further enhance the overall plan.

In 1995 the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects established the Carl Borgstrom Award for Service to the Environment.

Napier Simpson, Restoration Architect

The Creditdale farmhouse appears to have been expanded and altered in two phases—first by Borgstrom in the 1930s to 1940s and subsequently by the Kee family in the 1950s to 1960s. While Carl Borgstrom focused on the grounds and may have introduced the trellis structures on the front façade over the main doors, the Kee family altered and enlarged the main house while maintaining the original Neo-Classical character and detailing.

The alterations for the Kee family were undertaken by B. Napier Simpson and thus provide an interesting glimpse into the early career of a noted Canadian restoration architect working in what was then still an emerging field of specialization.

By the 1960s Simpson had prepared the restoration plans for major public heritage projects, such as the restoration of Dundurn Castle in Hamilton, and the development of historic village museums, including Black Creek Pioneer Village in Toronto, Lang Village in Keene and Upper Canada Village in Morrisburg. Other public commissions included restoration of the Paisley Town Hall, the Thornhill Village Library, Red Cottage and Edy House in Thornhill and the replication of the Francey farmhouse for Riverdale Farm at the Metro Toronto Zoo. In 1965 Simpson restored the historic 1829 Massey Estate in Grafton.

Napier Simpson's alterations to the Creditdale farmhouse appear to have included such things as the masonry wing with bell-cast roofline on the east façade, the masonry wings on the west façade and extending to the rear, the round, bulls-eye windows, the dormer windows, and the bay picture window on the east façade.

Contextual Significance of Creditdale Farm

Creditdale Farm has cultural associations with the former village of Churchville to the immediate south (now a heritage conservation district), Eldorado Park and Camp Naivelt just to the north, Bowstring Arch Bridge (designated heritage property), Credit River, the former villages of Huttonville and Springbrook and the Alexander Hutton farm known as "Bonnie Braes" (heritage designation pending).

The former Toronto Suburban Electric Streetcar Railway line ran near Creditdale Farm.

From 1912 to 1931, this small radial rail line ran just east of the property, connecting downtown Toronto with destinations in the Brampton area (Eldorado Park and Huttonville). The railway stopped at Mississauga Road and Embleton Road. After stops in Brampton the rail line went through Georgetown, Acton, Eden Mills, Rockwood and Guelph.

Archaeological Resources on Creditdale Farm

As a condition of the proposed plan of subdivision, H-R Development had to complete a stage 1-3 archaeological assessment in 2001.

The Credit River floodplain is rich in pre-contact archaeological potential. Some 11 archaeological sites were detected on the property. Four archaeological sites were registered. Three of the four registered sites are deemed "significant archaeological resources."

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The important sites have been flagged for on-going preservation, while the others have undergone some Stage 4 archaeological mitigation.

One of the sites to be retained is a large

and very significant "Broad Point" Late Archaic campsite (3500-3800 years ago). Late Archaic campsites were used as bases for diverse hunting and fishing, usually occupied seasonally for several months at a time. Large campsites are extremely rare—in fact, nothing like some of the sites discovered on this property has been discovered in Brampton and area before.

It should be noted that there are 25 registered archaeological sites within a 2.5 km radius of Creditdale Farm. A significant Iroquoian campsite was located further south along the Credit River floodplain during assessment for Highway 407 construction.

Recent Archival Discoveries

In October 2004 an important discovery was made when the original Creditdale Farm landscape drawings on linen were shown to city staff during a tour of the property. They were found in a desk drawer.

Borgstrom's plans will provide significant insights into his approach to landscape design. Obviously they can also serve as a restoration template if the grounds are restored in future. The Brampton Heritage Coordinator has made arrangements to reproduce this important documentation.

Members of the Borgstrom family have also been extremely helpful in piecing together elements of Carl Borgstrom's life and career.

Conclusion

Creditdale Farm is a significant cultural heritage resource. The ranges of heritage attributes (architectural, contextual, archaeological and historical) found on the property are unusually extensive and varied.

Contextually, the Borgstrom landscaping plan, along with the prominent landmark status presented by both the house and barn complex, the interactions with historic Churchville, the topographical elements such as flat terrace and bluff that overlooks the Credit River floodplain, natural landscaping elements, along with the associations between the known archaeological sites on the property and those on nearby properties along the floodplain, help form an intricate, unique and remarkable cultural landscape. This landscape helps define the distinctiveness of the Credit River valley and contributes greatly to the overall character and identity of the city of Brampton as a whole.

The architectural heritage attributes exhibited by the farmhouse and barn complex are significant. The house is a fine example of Neo-Classical style as it was interpreted in rural, nineteenth century Ontario. Built heritage of this vintage and style are increasingly rare in Brampton, as are the large barn and silos found at the rear of the house. The house and barn complex document the rich agricultural history of the region, as well as European settlement patterns and the evolution of farmstead practices in Ontario. It also documents the vanishing rural legacy of the City. The property is also very rich in significant and ancient archaeological remains.

These attributes are also generally well preserved. Since so many have survived, collectively, they help document the history of Brampton—literally from ancient times to the mid-twentieth century.

Jim Leonard is Heritage Coordinator for the City of Brampton



East elevation showing side and rear masonry additions, rear dormers, picture window, round, bulls-eye window, open porch with pediment roof and trellis structure (likely from the Napier Simpson alterations).



Borgstrom landscaping showing field stone pathways, climbing vines and the formal box-like layout of hedges (east side of property).



Details showing curvilinear fieldstone wall, steps and lamp-post in Borgstrom landscape plan. This view is taken from Creditview Road (east side of property).

Heritage conservation is the future

Paul Dilse



Collingwood - Downtown HCD
Photo courtesy Paul King, Ministry of Culture

Editor's Note: This article was originally published in The Record in Waterloo Region.

Ontarians have become more aware of preserving communities recently. Residents of the first heritage conservation district in Ontario—Meadowvale Village in Mississauga—celebrate the district's 25th anniversary this month. Since 1980, 71 heritage conservation districts have been designated by municipalities across Ontario according to Ministry of Culture statistics.

To put things in perspective, over 70 historic districts have been protected in New York City alone. Recent provincial initiatives and more interest in district designation at the local level indicate that the number of protected historic areas in Ontario could rise significantly.

The modest number of heritage conservation districts in Ontario can be explained in three ways. First, Ontario has had a slow start in the protection of historic areas. The urbanist



Goderich - Downtown HCD
Photo courtesy Paul King, Ministry of Culture

Anthony Tung in his book, *Preserving the World's Great Cities: the Destruction and Renewal of the Historic Metropolis*, dates Poland's 1928 law as the earliest preservation statute in modern times capable of protecting entire historic neighbourhoods. It predates the protection of the Old City District in Charleston, S.C., the oldest protected historic area in the United States (1931), as well as laws to protect historic areas in Paris, London, Amsterdam, Rome and Vienna.

Ever cautious, the government of Ontario finally enabled municipalities to protect historic areas (called heritage conservation districts) in 1975. By this time, 1,000 historic districts had been listed in the American National Register of Historic Places.

Second, legislation for heritage conservation districts was not incorporated in the province's main planning legislation, the Planning Act. To this day, land-use planners who thoroughly know the Planning Act tools of the official plan, zoning bylaw and site-plan control are often unfamiliar with Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act, which permits municipal councils to designate heritage conservation districts. With few municipalities having heritage planners on staff who can use the Ontario Heritage Act along with the Planning Act, there is resistance among land-use planners to understand and apply Part V of the Ontario Heritage Act.

Third, the provincial government chose a hands-off approach to designating districts, letting municipalities lead. Municipal heritage committees, made up of volunteers who advise municipal councils on heritage conservation matters, are usually left to prod reluctant land-use planners into looking at potential areas for protection as heritage conservation districts. In a Ministry of Culture survey in 2002, half of Ontario's municipal heritage committees operated on annual budgets of between \$1,000 and \$5,000.

In this atmosphere of institutional marginalization, those municipalities that have managed to designate heritage conservation districts have a lot to offer the whole province in the advice they can give. With over 70 districts already established and proving themselves, there exists in Ontario a body of positive experience to draw from and examples to follow.



Kitchener - Victoria Park HCD
Photo courtesy Paul King, Ministry of Culture

Bayfield, Cobourg, Port Hope and Seaford have designated their main streets. Brantford, Goderich and Kingston have designated the central square in their municipalities. Historic villages in Brampton, Markham, Pickering and Vaughan have been designated. Residential neighbourhoods have been designated in Hamilton, London, Oakville and St. Catharines.

After many years discouraging the establishment of heritage conservation districts, Toronto is catching up to Ottawa, which has been the leader in heritage conservation district designation. In Waterloo Region, Kitchener has designated three heritage conservation districts (Upper Doon Village, Victoria Park and St. Mary's), Cambridge has designated two (Blair village and Galt downtown) and Wilmot one (New Hamburg core).

Besides the comfort level that Ontario's existing districts give to other communities considering heritage protection, two other factors could influence a noticeable increase in the number of heritage conservation districts.

First, the provincial policy statement, a 10-year-old document that has provided provincial policy direction on land-use planning and development, was recently revised. The 2005 provincial policy statement not only strengthens heritage conservation activity but also encourages intensification and redevelopment of built-up areas. Municipalities have to set minimum targets for intensification and redevelopment within built-up areas. They are also obliged to conserve their built heritage and historic landscapes.

Currently, 62 per cent of Ontario's heritage conservation districts are residential neighbourhoods, villages and streets, indicating a higher level of interest for district designation in residential areas. As historic neighbourhoods that are not protected feel mounting pressure for intensification and redevelopment, the demand for heritage conservation district designation is likely to grow.

Second, the amended Ontario Heritage Act, which received royal assent on April 28, signals a greater provincial interest in heritage conservation, including for heritage conservation districts. It also improves the process of studying and planning for new districts. The revised act, for example, recognizes the practice of exempting certain types of exterior alterations from heritage review in heritage conservation districts. The exemptions are listed in the heritage conservation district plan which is worked out by the municipality and property owners in the district. Within the goal of protecting and enhancing historic character, communities are afforded

considerable latitude in deciding what level of architectural regulation is appropriate for their particular community. Communities can choose a more restrictive or more permissive approach to heritage review.

One of the myths about district designation that continues to circulate and frighten landowners is an imagined bureaucratic excessiveness to heritage review. Detractors frequently level this criticism as: "City hall will tell me what colour to paint my front door." In fact, painting woodwork can be included among the list of exempted alterations.

Naysayers will suggest that development is frozen in a heritage conservation district. In fact, alterations, additions, new construction and even demolition occur in heritage conservation districts. All proposals are reviewed against the heritage conservation district plan to ensure that change contributes to the district's character. They will say that property owners in a heritage conservation district are forced to restore their buildings. In fact, restoration to some fixed time in the past is not the intent of district designation.

They will assert that a heritage conservation district negatively affects property values. In fact, a 1998 study conducted by Robert Shipley of the University of Waterloo for the provincial government revealed that properties in heritage conservation districts generally tend to perform as well as or better than average in the local real estate market.

The naysayers will claim that owners are charged exorbitant premiums for insurance on their properties in heritage conservation districts. They fail to say that some insurance companies charge higher premiums for older buildings, whether they are in or out of heritage conservation districts.

They will claim that property owners in heritage conservation districts are forced to provide public access to their buildings. In fact, heritage review in heritage conservation districts is limited to exteriors. Property owners are not obliged to open their buildings to the

public. Naysayers will scare property owners by saying that district designation restricts the use of property. In fact, the zoning bylaw restricts the use of property. Myths such as these still derail the process in some places.

Despite the obstacles, resident groups and municipal councils are pursuing district designation as the best way to conserve and enhance historic places. The protection



Cambridge - Blair HCD
Photo courtesy Paul King, Ministry of Culture

of historic areas the world over has led to community improvement, economic revitalization and an increased sense of both personal and collective identity. Any initial qualms about district designation dissipate when the district plan's policies are implemented and residents see the benefits. For instance, in Kitchener where there are three districts—a fourth is being considered—every heritage permit application for alteration has been approved without resort to appeal.

For communities that are thinking about district designation, there are three ingredients that seem to be essential: residents' interest in conserving their community, a bond of trust established between the municipality and residents, and common purpose. Bill Thomson, the planner who was instrumental in designating Meadowvale Village, recounts that success had arrived when the city and villagers began working in concert.

Twenty-five years later, Leon Bensason, Kitchener's heritage planner, echoes Thomson's experience: the municipality and residents working towards the same goal and objectives is key.

Paul Dilse, a graduate of the school of urban and regional planning at the University of Waterloo, has practised heritage planning for 25 years.

Historic Places Initiative - A Values Based Approach

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 29TH: The Ontario Ministry of Culture, ICOMOS Canada, Ryerson University and Historic Fort York invite you to explore how the values based approach to heritage conservation is being applied both within Canada and abroad.

Join heritage professionals and academics from across Canada and around the world for a one-day workshop exploring the values-based approach to heritage conservation as applied to the ICOMOS Canada Congress theme of "The Significance of Setting". Students from Ryerson University will present the results of a charrette in which they will be called upon to respond to an actual heritage challenge at Toronto's historic Fort York. A jury of heritage experts will assess their work. Participate in discussion of this first ever ICOMOS Canada charrette in what promises to be an exciting day.

The cost of the full-day session is only \$75 per person, including lunch. Pre-registration through ICOMOS is required. For more information, please contact Dianne Thompson at 416-314-7125: Dianne.Thompson@mcl.gov.on.ca or visit the Ministry of Culture website at www.culture.gov.on.ca.

The North Waterloo Region Branch celebrates its 25th anniversary this year. At a special celebration at CIGI Waterloo (formerly the Seagram's Museum) on May 26, the branch executive invited special guest Peter Stokes to help cut the cake. From left to right are Herb Whitney (incoming President), Joyce Arndt, Bob Rowell, Marg Rowell (outgoing President) and Peter Stokes.

Photo: Goran Lekic



Wedding Bells at St. Alban's Church: New Life for Rockton's Architectural Gem

Ann Gillespie

The small community of Rockton (historically a village in Beverly Township), located just off Highway 8 between Dundas and Cambridge in the amalgamated City of Hamilton, is best known as the site of the Rockton World's Fair held annually in October. Less well known is the picturesque St. Alban's Church, a Gothic Revival stone building erected in 1869 as an Anglican parish church.

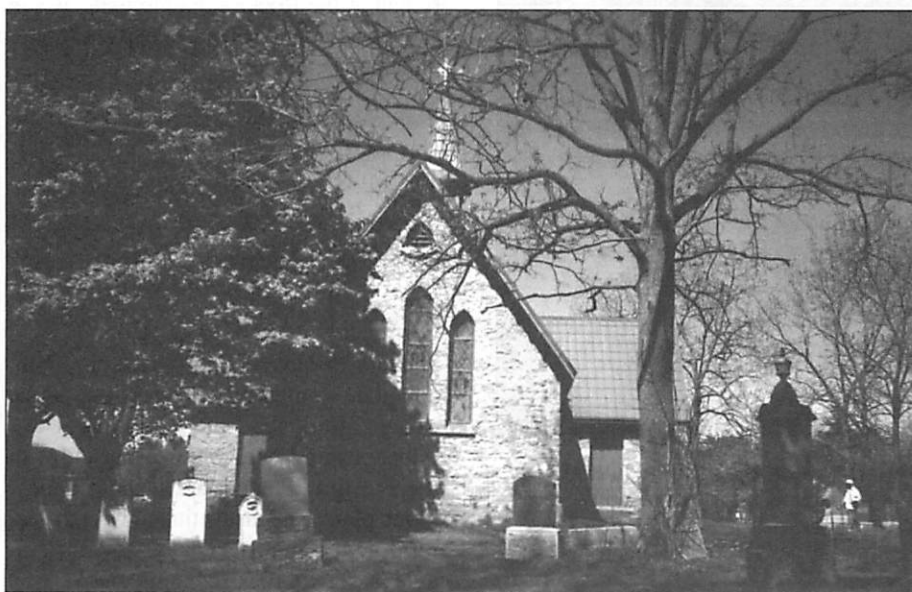
Constructed of locally quarried stone, St. Alban's is a simple but handsome example of a rural Anglican parish church. It features the typical cruciform plan and a steep-pitched gable roof crowned by a wood belfry housing a 250 pound cast-iron bell. The plastered gambrel ceiling of the sanctuary is articulated with wood ribbing. The focal point of the interior is the three stained glass windows in the chancel, representing Faith, Hope and Charity, a gift from the first rector's brother, Chief Justice Harrison of Toronto.

From 1869 to 1889 two services were held every Sunday. During the first half of the twentieth century, the congregation dwindled and by 1949, services were held only once a month and ceased altogether in 1950. The church was subsequently used only occasionally for services and concerts and has never been serviced with electric lighting or a modern heating system.

By the late 1990s, the Anglican Diocese had decided to sell the church property. Alarmed by a proposal put forward by a private company to purchase the property and convert the church to a columbarium with an associated crematorium, a group of local citizens formed a not-for-profit group called The Friends of St. Alban's. After successfully thwarting the columbarium plan, the group incorporated in 1999 and commenced negotiations with the Anglican Diocese to acquire the church building and adjacent cemetery. The Diocese finally agreed to sell the church property to the Friends of St. Alban's for \$1000 and the group took possession on December 14, 2001.



St. Alban's interior looking towards the three stained glass windows above the altar (east facade), with wedding ceremony officiated by Reverend Deborah Coleman in progress
Photo: John Overmeyer



View of the east facade of St. Alban's and adjacent cemetery, May 2005
Photo: Ann Gillespie

Once the intent to sell the property to the Friends of St. Alban's had been approved by the Anglican Diocese, the group approached City of Hamilton Heritage Planning staff about having the church and cemetery designated under the Ontario Heritage Act. The municipal heritage committee in Hamilton (formerly LACAC) was naturally delighted to receive this request as the church was clearly worthy of designation for both architectural and historical reasons. Still working for the city as a Heritage Planner at the time, I was assigned the task of researching the property and drafting the "Reasons for Designation." The designation by-law was passed in September 2002.

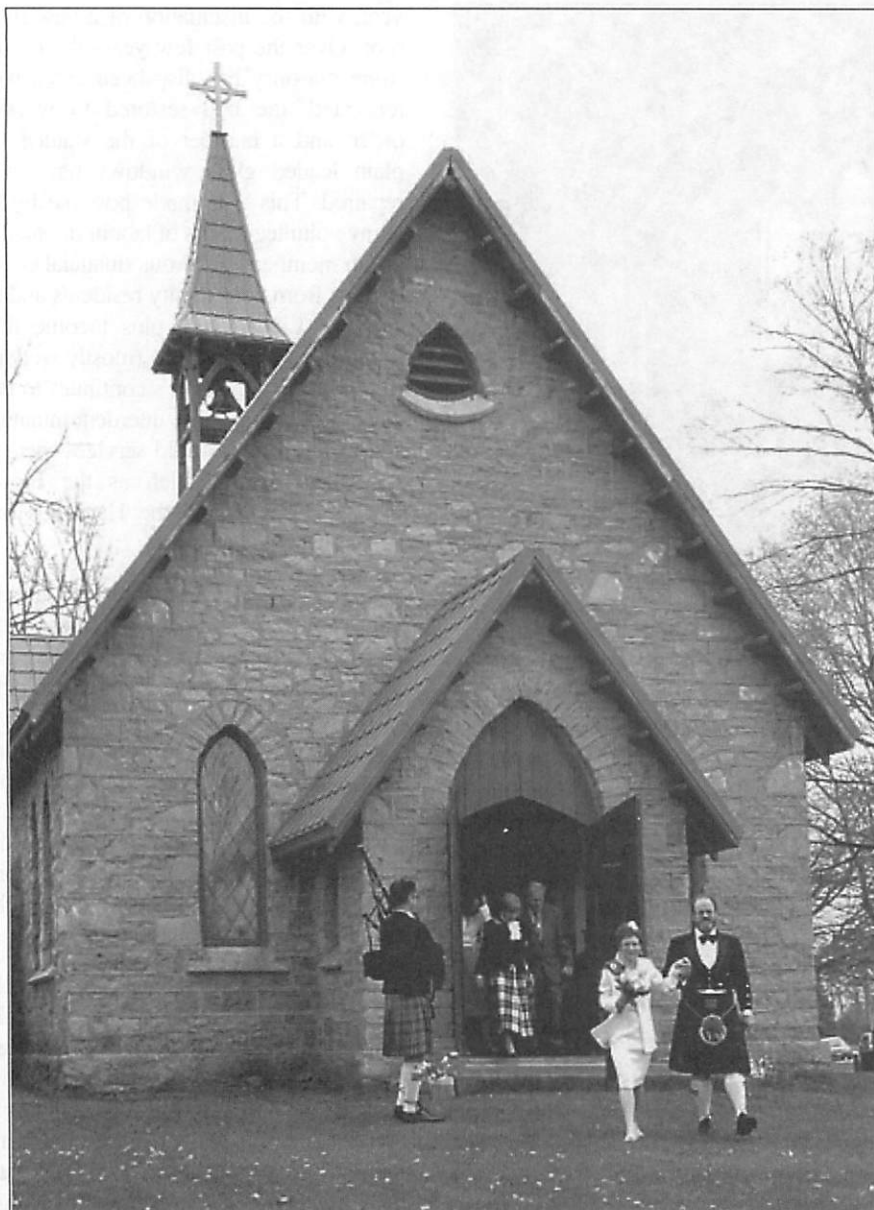
The Friends of St. Alban's have taken on an ambitious project but are tackling the restoration and rehabilitation work with unflagging enthusiasm, one stage at a time as funds become available. With water leaking through the roof and damaging the interior plasterwork, replacing the asphalt-shingled roof became a high priority. This was achieved last

year, with the installation of a new metal roof. Over the past few years the rubble-stone masonry has also been extensively repointed, the bell restored to working order, and a number of the stained and plain leaded glass windows have been repaired. This was made possible by the many volunteer hours of labour donated by group members, generous financial contributions from community residents and the Rockton Lions Club, plus income from rent for private functions (mostly wedding ceremonies). St. Alban's continues to be a place of worship (now interdenominational) and the Friends hold services there on special occasions, such as the Flower Festival in June and the Harvest Home Festival in September.

After taking early retirement from the city in December 2001, I had no further contact with the Friends of St. Alban's until January 2005, when I was starting to make plans for my own marriage to Stewart Patch from Ottawa. After preliminary investigation ruled out the possibility of a civil wedding at either Hamilton or Ottawa City Hall (no longer offered by either municipality), we were forced to think more creatively about how to "tie-the-knot" in a non-religious ceremony.

After settling on a mid-May date, I recalled that the St. Alban's Church was available for weddings and the weather should have warmed up enough by then for the ceremony to be held in this unheated building. It seemed like the perfect choice given my long-standing interest in and work-related involvement with historic buildings. Moreover, this particular building held a special significance, as the last one that I researched for designation while employed by the City of Hamilton. So I quickly lined up a minister and reserved the church for our wedding day on May 14, 2005.

In mid-April, Stewart and I, along with a few wedding guests, made a site visit to the church to check out the layout and furnishings. We were warmly welcomed by several members of the Friends of St. Alban's: Dorothy and Harm Kuik and Vi Collins (also a keen local historian). We were impressed by the group's devoted care of their building and strong commitment to their mission to preserve "the sanctity and heritage" of the church property: the building, grounds and gravestones. A particular source of pride was the restored bell, which we would use to announce the beginning and end



View of the west facade of the church with newlyweds Stewart Patch and Ann Gillespie being piped out by John Hannah following the ceremony
Photo: John Overmeyer

of our wedding ceremony.

On our wedding day, Harm Kuik willingly arrived early to open up the church for the floral arrangements to be set up (a more challenging task than usual given the lack of running water on site). Just prior to the noon ceremony, he lit the chandeliers with their original oil-burning lamps, which added a warm ambience to the interior on an overcast day. Our invited guests were most impressed with the church exterior and interior, admiring its architectural features and praising the dedicated efforts of this small volunteer group to maintain and restore the building. Some even chose to make donations to the Friends on behalf of

the newlyweds (as one of our suggested gift options). What a wonderful setting it turned out to be for our Celtic-inspired ceremony, complete with piper and fiddler. It was also gratifying to know that our wedding had supported and promoted the work of the Friends in some small way.

Shortly afterwards, it occurred to me that my reacquaintance with the group provided a good opportunity to encourage the Friends to take advantage of the ACO's PreservationWorks! consulting service (offered to not-for-profit groups for a very modest fee). With the support of our Branch president and several other ACO colleagues, I forwarded an application

form along with an example of a recently completed report to Vi Collins, for consideration at the group's next meeting in June, suggesting that they might request a condition assessment and advice on appropriate restoration techniques. The development of a long-term maintenance manual would also be a valuable resource, providing continuity through the inevitable changes in membership over time.

John Overmeyer, a freelance reporter/photographer and member of the Board of Directors of the Rockton Agricultural Society (who obtained permission to take photos at our wedding), recently shared his excellent idea to promote Rockton as an ideal wedding location. It would involve a collaborative venture between the R.A.S. and the Friends of St. Alban's to provide a complete wedding package, like Westfield Heritage Village, offering the use of the church for religious or non-religious ceremonies, a picturesque setting for photographs outside the church, and a community hall at the Rockton Fairgrounds, where receptions could be held. Clearly, a case of untapped potential!

Were it not for the vision, commitment and hard work of a few volunteers, this small piece of our local cultural heritage might have been converted to a less appropriate use, or worse, left standing vacant, and hence, vulnerable to vandalism and damage from neglect. Fortunately, St. Alban's Church now appears to have a brighter future. With adequate community support and some expert guidance, the Friends of St. Alban's should be able to continue with their restoration and landscape enhancement plans, ensuring that this architectural gem remains a viable and sustainable asset to be used and enjoyed by future generations of worshippers—and wedding parties.

The Friends of St. Alban's welcome visitors. Donations are gratefully accepted (by mail or donation box in the church, which is a wood model of the building). Contact Dorothy Kuik for a tour or to reserve the church for a private function (519 647 3788) and visit their website at www.stal-banschurh.ca for more details. The Friends have also gained public awareness through their past participation in the successful Doors Open Hamilton event, held annually in May (see article by Donna Reid in this issue).

Sidbrook's Make Over

Story and Photos by Ted Amsden, Cobourg Daily Star.

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Sidbrook front facade: the process of cleanup and uncovering can be seen from the street.

Built in 1850 in Gothic Villa style, Sidbrook was the summer residence of a Pittsburgh steel industrialist and his family. With 15 bedrooms, ample servants quarters and the evidence of a few remaining photographs, it is easy to imagine that it was a sumptuous estate where the residents enjoyed a luxury equal to a Rockefeller.

But the years have not been kind to this grand old lady. Her marble, her fixtures, some of the ornate wood that dressed her were sold by previous owners. In the early 1950s she was pressed into service for utilitarian purposes as a private hospital and consequently suffered many indignities.

The large library on the second floor was divvied up into five or six little bedrooms. Grand staircases were covered over with inglorious plywood and linoleum. Inlaid flooring featuring a variety of brilliant woods on the main floor were hidden under long swaths of dull sheeting. And everywhere, as per the building code, an ugly sprinkler system was installed cutting through architectural details without regard. Doors once arched and wide were replaced by featureless steel. Ceilings rich with plaster detailing were covered up with that favourite tarp of the mid-20th Century, the drop ceiling.

The task is daunting but Mr. Karras and his partner Robin DeGroot, owners of the Fresh Living store on King Street who are making their marks on the architecture of Cobourg as decorating wunderkinds, say they are "extremely excited."



Sidbrook drawing room: Evan Karras stands in the drawing room which features two fireplaces on the left. On the right, the entranceway for two large double french doors can be seen in the plasterwork.

What's it going to take to transform Sidbrook, that lovely 150-year-old beauty sitting forlornly opposite the youth prison on King Street East in Cobourg, into a stunning example of the era when Cobourg was the summer haven of wealthy Americans and labelled Newport of the North?

According to one of the two new owners, Evan Karras, a mere 12 months, plus the skills of four crews of 10 to 20 men.



Sidbrook craftsmanship: false ceilings covered up intricate patterns.

formed into a Beaux Arts mansion; one whose white paint covered up much of the detailing paint that brought out the ornate features of Gothic style.

At present, the house is being cleared of its hospital features. There are miles of add-on wires and piping to be torn out. More fireplaces are likely to be discovered. A garage must be torn down, rooms opened for the first time in a decades, and lots more walls with lots of surprises.

The end use of the building has not been decided. But the plans to turn the reconstruction of this wonderful old lady into a modern grand dame into a television series are in place. And—good news for Cobourg—local contractors will be the first ones contacted.



ACO Vice-President Catherine Nasmith received the Order of da Vinci medal from OAA President, G. Randy Roberts, at the OAA Celebration of Excellence on May 13, 2005 in Toronto. The Order of da Vinci recognizes architects who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in the profession, education, and/or service to the profession and their community.

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario

Application for New Membership or Membership Renewal

A Note about the Organization and Your Membership

As the ACO is structured, Provincial Council and the eleven Branches offer programs at the provincial or regional level, respectively. Provincial Council supports architectural conservation, provides technical advice through "PreservationWorks!", organizes workshops, publishes ACORN, assembles the annual conference program and provides a head office function. Branch programs vary from Branch to Branch. All Branches support architectural conservation. You may choose to be either an Ontario (Provincial) member or a Branch member.

All memberships are tax-creditable. All members receive ACORN and a discount on registration fees at the annual conference.

STEP 1

Please complete the form below:

Mr/Ms/Miss/Mrs/Dr/No Title First Name _____ Last Name _____

Organization's Name(if applicable)

Address _____ Postal Code _____

Daytime Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ Fax _____

E-mail _____

STEP 2

Please circle your choice of options A or B

- A. I would like to be a member of the _____ Branch of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario. A portion of my annual dues will support province-wide programs.
- B. I would like to be an Ontario member of the Architectural Conservancy of Ontario and not be affiliated with any Branch. All my annual dues will support province-wide programs.

Categories of Membership and Annual Dues -- check one

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual - \$30.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Household - \$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Organization - \$40.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining - \$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Corporate - \$45.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time Student - \$20.00

In addition to my membership, I would like to make a tax-creditable donation in the amount of \$ _____.

STEP 3

Please return this form to -- The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario
Suite 204, 10 Adelaide St. E., Toronto, ON M5C 1J3

If you chose Option A, please enclose a cheque made payable to the Branch of your choice
If you chose Option B, please enclose a cheque made payable to "The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario"

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Hamilton Region
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North Waterloo
South Bruce-Grey

London Region
Windsor Region

Date Cheque Received _____

Date Tax Receipt Issued _____ Membership Number _____



Ontario Culture Minister Madeleine Meilleur (on left) and ACO Windsor Region Branch President Pat Malicki leave the Hiram Walker Head Office following the ACO/CHO Conference Opening Reception in Windsor on April 29, 2005

The Architectural Conservancy of Ontario
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